



**Factual Report of Investigation Attachment-
Interviews, Statements and Documentation**

East Palestine, OH

RRD23MR005

(52 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN DERAILMENT *

IN EAST PALESTINE, OHIO *

ON FEBRUARY 3, 2023 *

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Interview of: CHARLES KNIGHT, BURT MCEWEN, MICHAEL STANKIEWICZ,
JAMES SULLIVAN

Witnesses

Ravenna Township, Ohio

Tuesday,
March 8, 2023

APPEARANCES:

SHERYL HARLEY, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:24 p.m.)

MS. HARLEY: Okay. So today is -- it's March 8, 2023. It is 1:24 p.m., local time, and I'm located at 5360 South Prospect --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Street.

MS. HARLEY: -- Street. That's in --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ravenna.

MS. HARLEY: -- Ravenna is how you pronounce it, Ravenna, Ohio. And this is actually the Lodge 9 and Lodge -- a FOPA Lodge 9 -- I'm sorry, FOP Lodge 70. Is that correct?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Correct.

MS. HARLEY: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MS. HARLEY: And I am Investigator Sheryl Harley. I am with the National Transportation Safety Board out of Washington, DC.

And, gentlemen, I'm going to ask you one-by-one to introduce yourselves.

MR. STANKIEWICZ: Mike Stankiewicz.

MR. SULLIVAN: Jim Sullivan.

MR. KNIGHT: Charles Knight.

MR. MCEWEN: Burt McEwen.

MS. HARLEY: Thank you, gentlemen. Okay. So what I'm going to do is I'm going to bring you back to last year.

INTERVIEW OF MIKE STANKIEWICZ

BY MS. HARLEY:

1 Q. And I'm going to start with you, Chuck, since you were
2 actually the eyewitness to the Norfolk Southern derailment here.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And just kind of sort of walk me through what you remember
5 about it.

6 A. The train wreck happened on November the 1st at 7:05. At
7 7 o'clock I come out of my living quarters, my home, step out in
8 the yard because Kent State was putting off their last fireworks
9 of the year. So I wanted to catch it. It's always a pretty sight
10 when they do them. So I stepped out, and, and I had to walk
11 around the back of my truck, and had my boat sitting out there on
12 the other side of the garage. I walked over within about six feet
13 from Mike and I about six feet from my boat, and I was standing
14 there, and they just started the fireworks. I looked at my watch,
15 and it said 7:05. I could hear a train coming, and when the train
16 came it flew by me. It had to be doing 50, 55 mile-an-hour. We
17 know the speeds that they're going. I could feel the breeze off
18 of the train, and I didn't pay any attention to it because trains
19 run through here every day and night. So I'm watching the
20 fireworks, and all of a sudden there's a loud bang behind me off
21 to my right-hand side. I turned and looked, and I could see a
22 fire underneath one of the cars. It went from the front of the
23 car clear back to the back side of the car into the other car.
24 And I thought the train was on fire. I thought something blew up.
25 I didn't know what to think. And as I'm looking it turned out to

1 be sparks. There were so many sparks it just looked like a fire.
2 There was another bang. There was an object that flew through the
3 air. It caught my eye. I seen something tumbling through the
4 air. I don't know what it was.

5 Within seconds, I mean, I just started hearing like a car
6 wreck, multiple cars, just bang, bang, clang, bang. And I'm
7 looking, and I see this object falling out of the sky, and it's a
8 car hauler full of brand new jeeps, and it landed right on my boat
9 me standing right there. I didn't know what to do. I mean, I
10 just, I kind of froze, and then I got my senses, I got my
11 bearings. I said, oh, God, man, there's a train wreck. I took
12 off running. I ran into the house. I got Butch who is kind of
13 hard of hearing. He was sitting in his living room watching his
14 TV. I screamed at him, Butch, we got to get out of the house. The
15 train is derailling.

16 So we ran out his front door. We got into the driveway, and
17 as we did the train -- we could hear the end of the train wreck,
18 the banging. It come to a complete halt, and it just got real
19 eerie, real quiet. You could hear like tinning and pinging, like
20 the metal, like it might have been hot, it was cooling or
21 whatever, but you could just hear the pinging and the banging.

22 We grabbed our flashlights. I called 911, and when I called
23 911 he asked me is anybody hurt or dead? And I told him I don't
24 know. They said is there any chemicals? I said, I don't know.
25 The train just derailed. We grabbed our flashlights, and while

1 I'm on the phone with 911, I'm looking for signals or patches on
2 the cars to see if there was any contaminated vehicles. I knew
3 there probably wouldn't be anybody hurt because it was a freight
4 train. I told the dispatcher I don't see any badges or emblems of
5 chemicals. I said, but that doesn't mean there isn't any
6 chemicals. I just don't know. I can't see anything. And once
7 again she asked me if anybody was hurt or dead, and I told her, I
8 said, ma'am, I don't know. I'm not walking into all that train
9 wreck. I said I'm not getting up in there and walking on them
10 cars.

11 Within seconds the Sheriff's Department come flying in, and
12 we took our flashlights, and we all started walking around looking
13 Fire Department started coming in. I mean, they shut down the
14 road out here. There was just multiple first responders here, and
15 there was just guttles (ph.) of them. They walked up the tracks.
16 I walked with them up to where the engineer and the conductor was.
17 And about a mile up the track we got to there they didn't even
18 know what there was a derailment, and they said they didn't know
19 what happened. They just know that the brakes locked up.

20 And then yesterday I was told by somebody who is supposed to
21 be one of the head maintenance guys out here, he told me that
22 there was a switch inside on them cars. There was a connection
23 from car-to-car. It shorted out, and that it was the engineer's
24 problem. They didn't respond to it or something.

25 That's what he was trying to tell me, but I find that kind of

1 funny. There were sparks from one end of the car to the other. I
2 mean, it just happened so fast. And I mean I'm telling them,
3 like, it happened within minutes, but technically it really did.
4 The train wreck was there, and it was done.

5 Q. So when, when you walked up to the engineer and the
6 conductor, who was with you?

7 A. Well, the fire department -- there was about five of them and
8 me. We walked up the tracks. They were looking to make sure
9 there wasn't anybody that would have gotten hurt or that. They
10 wanted to go check on the engine, make sure that they were still
11 on the track. That was my guess. Because everybody was running
12 around like chickens with their heads cut off serious.

13 Q. Okay. So the -- was it the engineer or the conductor that
14 said that he didn't -- they didn't know they had derailed?

15 A. Well, ma'am, you can't quote me on who was who in that train
16 because it wasn't a formal induction, introduction. It was, hey,
17 you guys okay? The fire department was doing all the talking. I
18 was just listening. And the gentleman on the left side of the
19 train facing south he would have been on the left-hand side facing
20 east, he was the one that was doing the talking. I couldn't make
21 out what the other gentleman that -- but I know for a fact there
22 was at least two in that train. I couldn't make out what the
23 other gentleman was saying.

24 Q. Which direction was the train facing?

25 A. The train was facing south towards Rootstown. That was the

1 direction it was going in.

2 Q. Okay. And you said the Sheriff's Department arrived on the
3 scene.

4 A. Yeah. Almost within three or four minutes of me calling 911
5 there was a sheriff's car flying in the driveway.

6 Q. Okay. Do you know if they spoke to the crew?

7 A. I cannot answer that because they didn't go down that track.
8 It was just the fire department and me at the time.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. And then I got scoodled (ph.) back. They told me I had to go
11 back. But they straggled in behind me. They followed me back.

12 Q. Okay. And can you give me kind of an idea of the damage that
13 occurred to the property?

14 A. Our property?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. Oh, yes, ma'am. It tore out the leach bed to the septic
17 tank. It broke the fence. Destroyed a 16 by 16 storage shed. It
18 knocked a hole in the roof in the garage, and that corner of the
19 garage. It just tore up the whole back yard. Took out all the
20 trees. There was trees back there. You can't even tell there was
21 a tree there. It just uprooted them everything. It destroyed my
22 boat. Destroyed my 24-foot aluminum ladder. Destroyed the cab
23 that goes on the back of my truck. They compensated us for a lot
24 of that today.

25 Q. Okay. So you did, you did speak to representative from

1 Norfolk Southern today?

2 A. Hear her say it she's not a representative. She told me she
3 wasn't representing Norfolk. Exact words she told me.

4 Q. Who did you speak to?

5 A. Ashley Harley.

6 Q. So you spoke to Ashley Harley --

7 A. Yes, ma'am.

8 Q. -- and she said she does what exactly?

9 A. She says number one -- well, she's registered as a claims
10 director in the Law Department. I have her card, if you'd like to
11 see it. I can grab it for you.

12 Q. I certainly would. She's the claims director in the Law
13 Department --

14 A. Yes. It says on there Law and Claims Department on the card.
15 I'll get it and let you see it.

16 Q. And but does it identify --

17 A. Norfolk Southern.

18 Q. Oh, she -- Norfolk Southern.

19 A. Yeah. She told me when she come out here today she wasn't
20 going to go on TV on the news because she was not a representative
21 of the railroad. That was her exact words.

22 Q. I understand that. Okay. But she is from Norfolk Southern?
23 Okay.

24 A. Yes, ma'am.

25 Q. All right. That's --

1 A. And when you're done with me, I'll grab that card for you.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I'll get you both her cards; her boss, Williams.

4 Q. Okay. So was she the only representative from Norfolk
5 Southern here today?

6 A. Yes, ma'am.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. They had another Norfolk Southern gentleman out there. I
9 only know him by Rick. I cannot really tell you his true job. He
10 says he's in charge of the maintenance and cleanup. He's bringing
11 a crew right now back through the woods. They're cutting a right-
12 of-way in so they can get to these two cars over there, and that
13 debris lying on that side of the tracks.

14 Q. Okay.

15 BY MS. HARLEY:

16 Q. All right. So can I call you Butch?

17 A. Yes.

18 MR. KNIGHT: You have to speak up a little.

19 INTERVIEW OF BURT MCEWEN

20 BY MS. HARLEY:

21 Q. Can I call you Butch?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay Butch. Is there anything else that you can add to that?

24 A. No. I didn't get -- I didn't see it. I was sitting in my
25 house.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And my house started shaking. I couldn't figure out what the
3 heck was going on.

4 Q. Okay, all right.

5 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So, gentlemen, I'm going to turn to you
6 now Mike --

7 MR. KNIGHT: Let me get the card.

8 MS. HARLEY: Jim.

9 INTERVIEW OF CHARLES KNIGHT,

10 BY MS. HARLEY:

11 Q. So kind of walk me through Norfolk Southern's response as far
12 as your property and what was going on.

13 A. Sure. That evening I received a call from the vice president
14 who heard the scanner, and said there's something going on at the
15 lodge. So I pull up the pictures on the camera, and I saw the
16 police department was trying to enter. We have a gate at the
17 front. So I called dispatch, and said go ahead and open it. Give
18 them a safe place to stage their area, and let them come in. I
19 didn't -- I did not arrive here to look at anything in person
20 until the next day. When I came the next day there were crews
21 everywhere cleaning up, moving cars, doing what they needed to do
22 to get the rails running. They got the rails running, I guess,
23 within 16 hours or so, 10 hours, somewhere in that area. And
24 they've been working -- they were working every day from that date
25 of the incident on November 1st through December. And then about

1 January 1, it seemed to stop. And there were subcontractors and
2 everybody coming in, and we were trying to monitor it the best we
3 can, and I really thank your neighbors for keeping an eye on
4 everything. I can't be here every day. This is just where our
5 office is and our building is for our members to use and be --
6 hope I'm answering that side of the question for you.

7 Q. Yes. You certainly are. Your camera, which way does your
8 camera face?

9 A. We have four cameras on the corners of the building only.
10 That's so it can be --

11 Q. Question. Did it --

12 A. -- basically southeast.

13 Q. Southeast. So did it capture any part of the derailment?

14 A. It did not. It was just outside the blind side.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And it was dark.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. And these cameras are not -- most cameras don't do very well
19 at night.

20 Q. Okay. So talk to me about your first encounter with a
21 representative from Norfolk Southern?

22 A. The first encounter with a representative I don't even know
23 the date. That's a good question. It was on that Friday,
24 probably that Friday, and they started to talk, and I'm guessing.
25 I don't have the dates in my head.

1 Q. No problem.

2 A. And it was just that they need -- they wanted to go over some
3 things. And then we created an -- they created an access
4 agreement. We agreed to it to get things cleaned, taken care of
5 and handled. And it hasn't been.

6 Q. Okay. So my -- so just want to make sure I got, got this
7 correct. So at that particular point there was an access
8 agreement that they signed with you. Was there an access
9 agreement with -- there was another neighbor; is that correct,
10 whose property was --

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sabrina's.

12 A. That's Sabrina Bennett that owns that property. I don't know
13 that answer.

14 Q. Okay. Now, Sabrina's property is on the opposite side of
15 yours?

16 A. Yes.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, ma'am. We sit in between both
18 properties.

19 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right, okay.

20 BY MS. HARLEY:

21 Q. So after the initial access agreement you said the work crew
22 -- the crews were actually here working through December, and then
23 January the work stopped. Did you get any kind of follow-up from
24 Norfolk Southern --

25 A. No.

1 Q. -- in January about it?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing.

3 A. No. Except they signed an additional access --

4 (Crosstalk)

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Signed a -- yeah.

6 A. So that would be -- yeah, they did sign an additional for two
7 more months.

8 Q. So, okay, Jim. You said they signed the --

9 A. No. We met them, we met them the end of December because
10 they signed for January and February.

11 A. It was the end of December. I don't remember all the -- I
12 didn't -- I have all the --

13 A. I was the only one that seen her in January.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. So the end of December that's when the additional access
16 agreement was signed?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. And then after you signed that did you see a crew?

19 A. They left the beginning of the second week.

20 A. So no would be the answer to that question.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I mean, we know when they were here because the work they
23 were doing was vibrating the ground like an earthquake.

24 Q. Okay. And I noticed when I came in that there are two
25 railcars still on the side out there.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Are those the -- are there more than those?

3 A. Those are the ones still here.

4 Q. Those are the last ones here?

5 A. Yes, ma'am.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Along with a bunch of wheels, and the truck units and all
9 kinds of rails and debris all the way down through there.

10 Q. Okay. The property on the opposite side of the track do you
11 have any idea whose property that is?

12 A. I do no.

13 A. The way I understand it the railroad owns 15 feet from the
14 tracks up. From that point over on the other side is a right-of-
15 way for the electric.

16 Q. Oh.

17 A. But there is -- what's the gentleman's name that owns that
18 property back in there?

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have no idea. I met him one day
20 from (indiscernible) but --

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- he just -- he's an older guy.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We understand.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't know his name though.

25 MS. HARLEY: All right.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You told us three times.

2 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right.

3 BY MS. HARLEY:

4 Q. So I understand that Norfolk Southern came today, and at this
5 particular point they now have a new agreement in place, and they
6 have promised to re-start their work. Did they give you a --

7 A. Just clean up.

8 Q. Right. Did they give you a timeframe in which a cleanup
9 would be competed?

10 A. No.

11 A. No.

12 A. They'll be here next month signing another access agreement.
13 I look at it that a way.

14 A. Yeah. And part of, part of the issue is, is going to be
15 weather on that, and just getting into -- I mean, it's, it's
16 March. So I mean it's -- that ground out there is pretty bad, and
17 it's soggy. So for them to get in there and do any kind of work
18 it's going to take a little bit to dry it out.

19 Q. Okay. Question. So, Jim, did you actually come here? The
20 day of the derailment did you actually come --

21 A. No.

22 Q. -- okay.

23 A. No, I came in on that Friday for the agreements.

24 Q. Okay. Has anybody, and I'll say everybody in the group here,
25 has there been any written reports outside of anything that I've

1 provided to you in regards to this or you provided any kind of
2 documents as far as that?

3 A. No.

4 A. Well, they're -- they have --

5 A. We've requested -- one of the requests in the original
6 agreements was we had the ability to request the reports for what
7 the -- each of the rail cars was carrying.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. In case there were any kind of chemicals or anything like
10 that. We actually formally requested that, and have never
11 received it.

12 A. They just today they got this from me a property damage
13 accident report, and I didn't fill everything out. I'm not going
14 to.

15 Q. Right. So I --

16 A. But I am seeing a doctor, and I do have a lawyer on it.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And then there's the release form.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. But if you read that release form that she -- if I didn't
21 sign we wouldn't have got a check for the material, the damages.
22 That release form basically says they're done with us.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. And I didn't want to sign it. And if you read it, it
25 strictly says that.

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. You know. So it's a Catch 9 here. They know what they're
3 doing.

4 INTERVIEW OF JIM SULLIVAN

5 BY MS. HARLEY:

6 Q. So, Jim, I'm going to get back to what you just said. You
7 made a formal request to find out what was in the rail cars.

8 A. Yeah. One of the agreements actually had outlined that the
9 owners of the property may request the report indicating the
10 contents of -- and the findings of any kind of hazardous spills or
11 anything like that.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. We actually formally at that request we actually formally
14 requested it at that meeting.

15 Q. Okay. Did you receive anything from them?

16 A. No. We have not received anything.

17 A. No. And there was three cars down on the bridge that were
18 hauling chemicals, and it was derailed. They didn't upset, but
19 they were off the track.

20 Q. Did you -- and you made this request in writing?

21 A. It's actually in one of the documents.

22 Q. It's in --

23 A. We took the -- we actually scratched out the contract or it's
24 the agree -- part of the agreement. We scratched out where it
25 says may request. We scratched it out and says do -- we actually

1 do request, yes. And then initialed and signed it.

2 Q. And that was the original agreement back in November?

3 A. Back in November, yeah. You'd have copies of that.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, I'd have to find it.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, that's fine, that's fine.

6 BY MS. HARLEY:

7 Q. When Ms. Harley had come in today did she address any of the
8 -- as far as the documents you requested?

9 A. No.

10 Q. No?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No. She kept saying she would have to
12 go back to her office or talk to somebody higher up for different
13 questions that I had.

14 If I'm not mistaken, Ms. Harley, she did state that she's
15 kind of new at this job. I don't believe I'm misquoting that.
16 Because she used to work on the tracks.

17 BY MS. HARLEY:

18 Q. She tells you she used to work on the tracks?

19 A. Yes, ma'am.

20 Q. Okay. Is there anything you think I should have asked you
21 and I didn't ask you about what happened that day?

22 A. Has it affected any of us? And, yes, ma'am, it has me. I
23 have a hard time sleeping now. I've got to move. There's no ifs,
24 ands or buts about it. Can't live no close to the tracks no more.
25 It just --

1 Q. How many times a day do the trains come through here?

2 A. Well, since you've been here they're not running them.

3 A. Exactly.

4 A. I'm not going to lie. They run every 20 minutes.

5 A. It seem when the news media has been here to help us --

6 A. They shut them down.

7 A. -- it slows down tremendously. But on an average day --

8 A. They run, they run on an average three trains an hour on an
9 average, on an average, either direction. They're not all three
10 going the same direction, but they run three on an average an hour
11 out there. Now, nighttime, from 12 o'clock to 2 o'clock it's
12 every 5 minutes you've got a train flying through out there.

13 Q. In the morning?

14 A. Yes, ma'am. Then it gets real quiet about 2 o'clock along
15 comes Amtrak. Amtrak comes through out there about 80 mile an
16 hour. You think I'm wrong, check their record. I'm dead right on
17 time. You'll see. And they have to log every time they come
18 through where their route is. So, well, you don't know if they're
19 sneaking or hiding other stuff. Who knows what they're hiding.

20 Q. Out of curiosity 2 o'clock when that Amtrak train comes
21 through which direction? Is it Amtrak going --

22 A. Towards north, Cleveland because --

23 Q. Towards Cleveland?

24 A. -- that's where the Amtrak station is.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. The way I understood it goes to Cleveland, and then from
2 there to Toledo, and then Chicago.

3 Q. Got it. Okay, that's -- all right. I know which train that
4 is. Okay. All right.

5 A. Then I was told that Amtrak has a contract with Norfolk
6 Southern that when it's running their trains are stopped and out
7 of the way so Amtrak can go through. They don't -- and Rick is
8 the guy told me that. He says they don't hold up movement of
9 passenger. Am I correct on that? Yeah, that's what he told me
10 too.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Have you noticed the trains are -- the
12 length of the trains are actually smaller?

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You ain't here at nighttime, brother.
14 They're every bit of 180 to -- if I can count them. Some of them
15 are going so fast I can't keep up with the count, but if I'm in an
16 angle I can count them. And last night I counted 228 cars on one
17 train.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One of the --

19 BY MS. HARLEY:

20 Q. Last night?

21 A. Yes, ma'am.

22 Q. What time, what time was that?

23 A. That was about 11:30. I'm standing out there with my
24 flashlight.

25 Q. 11:30. Which direction was that train going?

1 A. That was headed south.

2 Q. Okay. Heading south to (indiscernible). Okay, all right.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Speed was the other. Since February
4 this -- we've noticed the speeds increased.

5 BY MS. HARLEY:

6 Q. So they're smaller and slower during the day?

7 (Crosstalk)

8 A. We're here I noticed the speed were slower since February.

9 So --

10 A. Well, those trains only run about 55 mile an hour tops
11 usually. And they sit right out there, and that guy with that
12 camera from Channel 8 News sat right out there. He says that's
13 got to be -- and even Ashton Harley said it when that train went
14 through she says that's doing 50, 55. I said I've been telling
15 you that. There is -- the only time they slow down, Jim, is like
16 yesterday they were working on the tracks. They slowed down.

17 MR. SULLIVAN: I understand what you're saying. We had --

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They're not --

19 MR. SULLIVAN: We had three trains come through. Two of them
20 were running slow, and that one that they got video of that thing
21 was just flying through.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was just one. There was another
23 one out there that ran through too. Them trains are not slowing
24 down, Ms. Harley. Here, I'll open the door you'll see it.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Watch on the camera.

1 (Simultaneous indiscernible comments.)

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. He's probably doing about 40,
3 45. You hear that clicking?

4 (Listening to train going by.)

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Lot of tankers on there.

6 How many did you get?

7 MS. HARLEY: Got 108 plus the local (indiscernible).

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When you hear that clicking that's
9 where the welder broke down. They never came back and finished
10 welding the track together.

11 MS. HARLEY: Okay, well, I think I got all the information I
12 need. I will have to talk to the Sheriff's Office, and find out
13 if they had filed any reports on this.

14 You don't know if they did or not?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't know that.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, yes, they did. They took a
17 statement from me.

18 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So there's a report there.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- there's a report file.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There should be, yes.

21 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because I think Ravenna PD was the
23 first unit out here with a car with a cruiser.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, the sheriff.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Was it the sheriff?

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: My driveway, yeah. They pulled right
2 out in the driveway.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because somebody -- I had somebody on
4 camera right in front of my --

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, there was all kinds of --
6 (Crosstalk)

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- and that's when I called dispatch
8 to say --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- driveway. The first vehicle pulled
10 in was the deputy sheriff. He pulled right up to the side door
11 there, and he jumped out. When he jumped out he says anybody
12 hurt? I said we're not.

13 MS. HARLEY: Okay, all right.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He did get a statement from me, the
15 -- it's got the time on it, but if I'm not mistaken the time on it
16 was in the morning before he left, the deputy, the first one was
17 here was the one that got the statement from me.

18 MS. HARLEY: All right. I will --

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- recordings --

20 MS. HARLEY: -- check --

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- on the 911 call too.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, they do. They played it on TV.

23 MS. HARLEY: So I'll do that. Well, gentlemen, thank you
24 very much. Unless you think of anything else what I am going to
25 give you is my card. Anything else comes to mind please feel free

1 to give me a call.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just want to tell you they say it's
3 supposed to be 35 mile an hour out there.

4 MS. HARLEY: Yeah. We'll have to --

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- just said it again today. That's
6 why Ashton Harley, Harley says, oh, my goodness you're right, they
7 are flying through here.

8 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. All right. So we're going to
9 end the interview. It's at 1:54 p.m.

10 (Whereupon, at 1:54 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN DERAILMENT
 IN EAST PALESTINE, OHIO
 ON FEBRUARY 3, 2023
 Interview of Charles Knight, Burt McEwen,
 Michael Stankiewicz & James Sullivan

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD23MR005

PLACE: Ravenna Township, Ohio

DATE: March 8, 2023

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.



Katherine Motley
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN DERAILMENT *

IN EAST PALESTINE, OHIO *

ON FEBRUARY 3, 2023 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: MARK KOZAK, Incident Commander
Fire Chief

JAMES DIPOLA, Trustee
Township

Ravenna Township, Ohio

Tuesday,
March 8, 2023

APPEARANCES:

SHERYL HARLEY, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

(3:52 p.m.)

MS. HARLEY: Okay. So good afternoon. My name is Sheryl Harley. I'm an investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. Today is March 8, 2023. It is at 3:52 p.m., and I am here at the Ravenna Township, okay. And I' located at 6145 Spring Street. Okay, all right, in Ravenna, Ohio.

And gentlemen, can I ask you just to identify yourself, please.

MR. DIPOLA: Jim Dipaola, Ravenna Township Trustee.

MR. KOZAK: Mark Kozak, Ravenna Township Fire Department liaison to the Trustees. And I was the Fire Chief at the time of the train wreck.

MS. HARLEY: Great. Thank you very much. So today we're going to actually talk about that derailment that occurred on November 1, 2022, that occurred off of -- let's see, location you have on your report is 5368 South Prospect Street.

INTERVIEW OF MARK KOZAK

BY MS. HARLEY:

Q. So I was wondering if you can kind of sort of walk me through starting from when you were notified, and just kind of walk me through the operation, and then we'll talk about your, your coordination with the railroad.

A. Sure. So we were actually in a trustee meeting that night. We heard what we thought was fireworks because it was also

1 homecoming for the local college, only to find out that what we
2 heard was not the fireworks. It was the train derailment. So
3 shortly after hearing that we were dispatched for a train
4 derailment. Multiple calls came in. We responded with our on-
5 duty crew which would have been engine company and a med unit, and
6 then I was also here. So I responded in my chief's truck.

7 We arrived -- it was dark because the incident occurred after
8 seven o'clock at night in November -- to find some train cars
9 derailed. We didn't know anything other than we could see some
10 train cars derailed, but we did not know if there's any hazardous
11 materials involved. We didn't know if there's any rescue
12 involved. Initially established incident command. Sheriff's
13 Office was already on scene prior to us, and they had actually
14 started walking the tracks. So utilizing our State of Ohio
15 (indiscernible) radios, we were able to communicate with the
16 Sheriff's Department directly, and started obtaining information
17 as to what those deputies were seeing. We had also started to
18 investigate at our end. We requested mutual aid that's in our
19 court for additional resources. Ravenna City, which we completely
20 surround, arrived on scene. So they're captain on their fire
21 truck was designated operations that I just assumed would stay in
22 incident command. Given that the train also went into Rootstown
23 Township their fire chief also arrived. So we had somewhat of a
24 unified command so we could actually identify where the derailed
25 cars were. We were able to rather quickly identify that they were

1 all derailed in Ravenna Township so it was our incident, and the
2 Sheriff's Department is our police. But we also had Ravenna City
3 Police on scene which helped drastically.

4 Shortly after arriving, I went right to the (indiscernible)
5 was able to find Norfolk Southern's emergency response number. It
6 was already identified through dispatch that it was a Norfolk
7 Southern train. I think -- I don't know if the train conductor
8 also called this in or how it was done, but we knew it was Norfolk
9 Southern train going to the incident.

10 So when I called that number they already had been notified.
11 So they were aware of it. Acknowledged we had multiple cars. We
12 were able to rather quickly define that most of them were car
13 carriers, jeeps, and I think F-150, but don't quote me on that
14 one. But we had a white powdery substance on the ground that we
15 did not know. So they took down my phone number. Said they were
16 going to call us back.

17 In the meantime, we were able to find another car similar to
18 it, and get that number off of it to identify the substance as
19 rock salt. And then shortly after that I actually got a phone
20 call from a hazmat specialist for Norfolk Southern -- started
21 walking me through what part of the train things were at to also
22 identify that it was rock salt.

23 In the meantime, the conductor ran only at least a mile with
24 the manifest. So we were able to look at the manifest that you
25 have, and identify, okay, these are the derailed cars. And then

1 right off the bat we could tell it was rock salt and car carriage.
2 If you have the full manifest, which I don't have, I want to say
3 10 cars to the south was either LPG or it was some type of
4 combustible. It might have been diesel. And then that's not in
5 the report. That's me trying to remember off the top of my head.
6 And 10 cars to the north was a -- maybe a hydrogen dioxide. It
7 was a hydrogen something which, again, you'd have to look at the
8 manifest to tell. Those 10 cars to the north were off the track
9 and tipped. It appeared that the other two cars were holding
10 those up. And those were also blocking a residential neighborhood
11 for three days that did not have access to their house.

12 So there's five houses that there's -- that we had no access
13 to for fire, EMS, and they had no access to their houses or out of
14 their houses.

15 It's also a crossing where a family of three was killed nine
16 years ago?

17 MR. DIPOLA: '13, 2013. There was a 16-year-old girl
18 killed.

19 MR. KOZAK: Stopped on the tracks. And I believe here and --
20 it may have been a double fatality. But that is something that
21 Jim has been trying to work with the railroad on (indiscernible)
22 to try to get a different entrance to those houses with no
23 success.

24 MR. DIPOLA: No success.

25 MR. KOZAK: So anyways back to this derailment. The ASCAT

1 rail app did work. We were able to identify what we had. We
2 identified rather quickly that there was no hazmat, and we didn't
3 have any injuries other than the two hazmat cars that were off the
4 tracks but not derailed.

5 We were able to with our call-back people use our ATV and
6 actually hop on the railroad tracks behind us to run the entire
7 train. And then we also were able to get a drone deployed so that
8 we could see the entire train to see if there were any other cars
9 derailed.

10 We can show you a map when we're done how long that train
11 actually was from where the conductor was to where we were to
12 where it actually ended because it's pretty impressive.

13 BY MS. HARLEY:

14 Q. Do you still have your drone imagery?

15 A. So we don't have -- so -- it was an issue on our end to get a
16 drone. We don't have a drone. Ravenna City Police Department,
17 was part of Metro SWAT, but they couldn't get a SWAT officer out
18 to get their drone in the air, and Portage County sheriff's drone
19 was down at the time. So they could not get theirs in. So we
20 actually had the captain for Ravenna City friend fly his drones,
21 they can find his cows. Talk about getting the rural area. But
22 his drone he just updated so it had thermal imagery and everything
23 on it. So we were able to actually at least watch it, but I don't
24 have any footage.

25 Q. Okay. So you said it was -- when you said Ravenna City,

1 Ravenna City Police Department?

2 A. Ravenna City Police --

3 Q. The captain who had a friend.

4 A. -- the Fire Department. He was from fire --

5 Q. He was from the Fire Department. He had a friend. Okay.

6 A. The Police Department would have been the SWAT team would
7 have had to been deployed, and they couldn't get a pilot.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And then the county sheriff's drone was not available because
10 it was down for maintenance. But we at least found somebody with
11 a drone, and that was a huge help. We also -- the train conductor
12 was a huge help. He was a volunteer firefighter. So as soon as
13 it derailed and he knew that it derailed he was off the train once
14 he could get it stopped running to see what part of the train
15 derailed because he was worried that A it derailed in a
16 residential neighborhood, or, B, something really bad derailed.

17 Q. Okay. So I want to get back to this residential neighborhood
18 that was blocked for three days. So you had the -- were the
19 residents -- so the residents were blocked could not go home?

20 A. Unless they crawled over the train or they could not leave
21 unless they crawled over the train. There's no vehicle access
22 over the -- other than one crossing. So the train -- you know
23 more about trains, Jim. When the sensors fall and they slow down
24 on their own.

25 MR. DIPOLA: Yeah. When they -- if they get tripped at the

1 detector then they wind up slowing down, they block that crossing
2 on a regular basis. We've had this ongoing issue with that
3 crossing being blocked for 30 years.

4 MR. KOZAK: It only affects four or five houses. So
5 it's not --

6 MR. DIPAOLO: There's three houses back there.

7 MR. KOZAK: Or three.

8 MR. DIPAOLO: Well, it's my cousin's house. So I'm very
9 familiar with it.

10 INTERVIEW OF JAMES DIPAOLO

11 BY MS. HARLEY:

12 Q. Okay. All right. Let me see --

13 A. I will say as far as the response, CS -- or Norfolk Southern
14 did have local people who as we started contacting with them and
15 talking with them it would be the local person in charge of the
16 derail or the local person in charge of crossings, but none of
17 them could make decisions. So we really had nobody up from the
18 rail -- which they had a fast response, but none of them could
19 make decisions. It was about an hour into it that a lady showed
20 up, and one of them made the remarks, and again I don't know
21 names, that she's the first person here who can actually make
22 decisions, but she's going to be busy going door-to-door getting
23 consents signed and getting the checkbook out because it's going
24 to be a big mess.

25 MR. DIPAOLO: Is it okay if he sits at the dock station?

1 MR. KOZAK: He's from CTMS.

2 MS. HARLEY: I don't --

3 MR. KOZAK: That's fine. She's recording us. So if you're
4 talking, she can hear you, but other than that, that's fine.

5 BY MS. HARLEY:

6 Q. Okay. And --

7 A. So, yeah, that was an issue. The phone call -- we have a
8 fast response. I had the phone call back fast from whoever their
9 hazmat person was. They did dispatch the rail police. They got
10 there about 45 minutes later. I believe he came out of Cleveland.
11 He was concerned that -- he actually asked was there any foul play
12 here? I don't know. And then we had a hazmat crew come from
13 Cleveland. They sent a cleanup team. So they were not -- they're
14 third-party contractors. They weren't affiliated with the
15 railroad, but the railroad did contact them, and they were there
16 before any of the hazmat people from the rail was there, which I
17 think that they were coming out of Pennsylvania, but I'm not 100
18 percent sure on that.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. It was about two hours into -- it's documented in the report.
21 So this happened at seven --

22 Q. I have here the general alarm was a 7:10:50 or --

23 A. Yeah. So --

24 Q. -- or 19:10:50.

25 A. -- 19:10 is --

1 Q. Right.

2 A. -- around --

3 Q. I'm sorry.

4 A. If you look at the narrative on the third page it was pretty
5 much closer to around 10 o'clock when Tom Nabiski (ph.) arrived.
6 That's his phone number. And he was the operational person for
7 Norfolk Southern that could make all the decisions.

8 Q. Okay. And then he was going to be in charge until Dave, and
9 then it was going to rotate to Dave Gooden (ph.), which, again,
10 no, no hazmat, no scene safety, no life safety for us. So once we
11 established there's no life safety, no hazardous material leaks or
12 anything like that, we turned it back over to the railroad. So we
13 were only there for maybe three hours.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. We did have our hazmat team respond, the county hazmat team.
16 So as soon as we saw the white powdery substance, didn't know what
17 that was, the phone call went out to (indiscernible) for a hazmat
18 consult, and then they activated the team. And then they did do
19 air monitoring. Our biggest concern at that point once we
20 realized it was rock salt was how much gasoline is shipped in a
21 new car. Because there's at least, I believe, eight or nine of
22 those derailments were new cars. So with them being mangled and
23 on their side we didn't know if any oil or gasoline or anything
24 like that could be a concern. Again, small hazmat there, but
25 still could be considered if they were all full.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Hazmat team was able to confirm there was no hydrocarbons or
3 anything like that.

4 Q. Who did eh air monitoring?

5 A. Hazmat.

6 Q. The -- your -- the county -- okay. Portage hazmat. Okay.

7 A. So all of, all the fire departments participate in the county
8 hazmat --

9 Q. Got it.

10 A. And that hazmat team has vehicles throughout the county, but
11 the majority of that hazmat team comes out of the Kent Fire
12 Department which is right next door to us.

13 Q. Okay. All right. Okay. So since then have you had any, any
14 contact with Norfolk Southern?

15 A. Fire and safety side?

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. After we left that night that was the end of our contact with
20 Norfolk Southern.

21 Q. Okay. So I want to go back to the conversation we had prior
22 to we started recording, and talk about the training, the local
23 training that you guys have had, and if you've had any training
24 from the, from the railroads?

25 A. Have not had any training from the railroad. And then

1 actually it was through other training classes in the past that I
2 even knew to download the ASH rail app.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Which it did help tremendously.

5 Q. Um-hmm. That's good.

6 A. Especially even with that piece of paper in front of you we
7 were able to look on that and go, okay, what's after the train
8 cars that are derailed? What's after the train cars that are
9 derailed -- each direction so we know in case something else
10 happens what are we dealing with?

11 Q. So can you guess the last car in -- on this train was
12 approximately where?

13 A. We need to look on the map. It was Sandy Lake Road in
14 Rootstown was where I -- where we believe the locomotive was in
15 that area.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. The last car was Diamond Street, Ravenna City.

18 Q. Okay. Diamond Street.

19 MR. DIPOLA: When I went home that night, I looked up, and
20 the train was --

21 MR. KOZAK: Yeah.

22 MR. DIPOLA: -- still sitting on --

23 (Crosstalk)

24 MR. KOZAK: -- the Norfolk Southern train crossing at Diamond
25 Street is a bridge CSX goes over the road.

1 BY MS. HARLEY:

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. So the car, the train was on the bridge for multiple days.

4 Q. Okay. Got it. Sandy Lake that's in Rootstown Township, and
5 then Diamond Street is Ravenna City. Okay. All right. So let's
6 see. So good job on the ASH rail. It's always nice to see it
7 actually works in real time. And pretty much I think your report
8 actually answers all of my questions about the response and what
9 went on. Is there anything you think I should have asked you, and
10 I failed to ask you about this?

11 A. I don't think so.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Been lucky with the cars that derailed (indiscernible) that
14 inconvenience to the area. I do know that there was a lot of talk
15 from the initial responders who couldn't make any decisions really
16 that, this person couldn't get into parking lot at the FOP.
17 They're going to pay to have these cars on the property. The main
18 road's probably going to get torn up. That's got to be closed
19 down which they did shut South Prospect down which is the main
20 artery that goes through Ravenna for what was that, a day?

21 MR. DIPOLA: A day, just when they were offloading the
22 vehicles.

23 MR. KOZAK: Which was a very large inconvenience especially
24 for the school system because they had to reroute all of their bus
25 traffic for four elementary schools, middle school, intermediate

1 school and the high school. Whether or not that actually had to
2 be closed I don't know.

3 BY MS. HARLEY:

4 Q. Let's see here. There was something else I wanted to ask
5 real quick. On the average can you tell me how many trains
6 actually go through your jurisdiction?

7 A. On both rails or --

8 Q. Yeah. I, yeah, and --

9 A. I'm guessing it's probably about 60 trains a day.

10 Q. Six, six zero?

11 A. Six zero.

12 Q. Okay. And that includes Norfolk Southern line and the CSX
13 line?

14 A. Seems to be there's a lot more trains on the top line since
15 that's the main route from Pittsburgh to Chicago. So CSX has
16 downgraded their amount of trains they run because they got --
17 when everybody bought out Conrail they got a route around --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- goes to upstate.

20 Q. Okay.

21 MR. KOZAK: And I can definitely say so I started here in the
22 '90s, and then left in '08. I left as a lieutenant in '08, and
23 then got hired from the outside as a fire chief in 2013. And I
24 can definitely say without even blinking that the trains between
25 that time they were much more often in the early 2000s. When I

1 came back in 2013 there were (indiscernible). They were not
2 anywhere near as often, but they were a lot longer.

3 MS. HARLEY: That's good. All right.

4 MR. KOZAK: That would have been (indiscernible) '15 I came
5 back. So in that seven-year time span they definitely got longer.

6 BY MS. HARLEY:

7 Q. Let me ask you a question approximately, and I know you may
8 not know this. This may be a bizarre question. Do you have any
9 sense of how fast the trains come through here?

10 A. They're probably doing -- I know what the posted speed limits
11 are so I can kind of judge. I'd guess it's about 45, 50 miles an
12 hour. And Amtrak comes through a lot more faster.

13 Q. Okay. How many Amtrak trains come through here? Do you
14 know?

15 A. We get -- there's two, one going east, one going west.

16 Q. Okay.

17 MR. DIPOLA: Good person to ask about trains.

18 BY MS. HARLEY:

19 Q. Okay. Out of curiosity, what time does the Amtrak train come
20 through here?

21 A. That's usually the middle of the night.

22 Q. Middle of the night?

23 A. Up to -- they're stop in Alliance is about 2:30 a.m. So
24 right around between 2 and 3.

25 Q. Got it.

1 A. They're never on time.

2 Q. Copy that. Okay. So -- no, no go ahead.

3 A. So I can't say over time we've not had very many rail
4 incidents other than the fatality car -- we occasionally get
5 people that jump in front of them.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. But, again, that's not actually the derailment at all.
8 Occasionally we'll get something burning but -- a locomotive or
9 something like that. They know we're a fire station. So they can
10 plan it. That hasn't happened in a really long time. And then
11 occasionally a medical emergency or the conductor needs something,
12 and they know that this is a place that they can slip out. So
13 we've had that before too.

14 Q. So I guess my last weird question to you. Looking back on
15 the incident what would you want to see changed?

16 A. I think communication is important. And I also think we're
17 having this conversation at my full-time job. I was talking to a
18 few guys who have been in the hazmat industry for most of their
19 career in the fire service, and they all seem to say the same
20 thing. It seems like when they first came on in the '90s and the
21 early 2000s the railroad was the leader in all of this. They were
22 teaching hazmat classes. There wasn't a rail person who wasn't in
23 local hazmat class. And that seemed to completely change through
24 the 2000s -- now to where the stigma -- the first service still
25 is, because we've been taught that, but the railroad knows this,

1 the railroad has this down pat, and it's obvious they don't.
2 Based on our train derailment I can definitely tell you that it
3 doesn't seem like there's any command structure. No one can make
4 a decision until somebody came in from far away. If we had had a
5 hazardous materials incident, we would have been relying heavily
6 on our hazardous materials team port of the ASH rail app. But,
7 again, if the car's on its side, and let's say we didn't have
8 access to the conductor, we would have to eventually find
9 something we could find, and backtrack it at seven o'clock at
10 night when it's pitch black and there's no lights. That's
11 difficult.

12 Q. Okay. Any other last thoughts you think?

13 MR. DIPOLA: My biggest thing and what I'd like to see
14 different is the training. Not only the hazmat training, but just
15 a basic railroad course of how to deal with the railroad -- the
16 railroad language, and that's --

17 MR. KOZAK: I also think based on the press release this
18 morning, Governor DeWine's Office, that Norfolk Southern now is
19 going to do training. They're going to open a training center in
20 the state, and build one eventually. That's not a good model.
21 That's great, but any county that the railroads go through there
22 should be a county class from whatever railroad whether it's CSX,
23 Norfolk Southern, wherever you're at in the state or in the
24 country. But that needs to be aimed at the local level because
25 you're not going to get a volunteer fire department or even our

1 fire department which is a combination department here of full-
2 time and part-time people. I can't afford right now to send full-
3 time people on overtime three hours away for training when we can
4 barely staff our fire station right now because of our staffing
5 shortages. But if there's something in the county, that's a huge
6 difference, or something regionally.

7 MR. DIPOLA: Be a nice idea if the railroads -- they're
8 spread thin nowadays anyway. There's not the same amount of
9 people there was 20 years ago, but it would be nice if they would
10 have a course like train the trainer so that in the counties there
11 would be one person that's certified or qualified by the railroads
12 to reach a course. Then they could take advantage of that rather
13 than wait for the railroad to come around. And it would be easy
14 to do a train the trainer thing.

15 MR. KOZAK: Well, and then take the departments that are
16 completely full-time, and then there's no way that you're going to
17 send a department of 50 people to a training. We don't have the
18 large departments like the metro departments or anything like
19 that. Most of this area our larger fire departments are around
20 50, but still that's a lot of money and a lot of time from a --
21 but it's needed training obviously.

22 MS. HARLEY: Absolutely. Okay. Gentlemen, thank you very
23 much. I certainly do appreciate it.

24 We'll end the interview. It's 4:16 p.m.

25 (Whereupon, at 4:16 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF: NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN DERAILMENT
 IN EAST PALESTINE, OHIO
 ON FEBRUARY 3, 2023
 Interview of Mark Kozak and James Dipaola

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD23MR005

PLACE: Ravenna Township, Ohio

DATE: March 8, 2023

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.



Katherine Motley
Transcriber

From: [Payan Ruben](#)
To: [Harley Sheryl](#)
Subject: FW: East Palestine Derailment
Date: Sunday, February 19, 2023 3:42:04 PM

From: Grosos Erik [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2023 8:59 PM
To: Payan Ruben <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Fw: East Palestine Derailment

FYI

Regards,
Erik

Erik R Grosos
Chief-Special Operations Division
NTSB HQ-DC

From: Jody Edwards [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2023 19:12
To: eyewitnessreport <eyewitnessreport@ntsb.gov>
Subject: East Palestine Derailment

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

witness@ntsb.gov

Dear NTSB Investigators,

First let me thank you for the difficult job that you do and the efforts you make to keep us all safe. I am not sure whether or not my statement will be helpful to you as I do not have any audio or video documentation. On the night of February 3, 2023, sometime between 8:40 to 8:45 PM, the train that eventually derailed in East Palestine was traveling through Columbiana. I live at 231 S Vine Street in Columbiana and can see and hear Norfolk Southern as well as Amtrak trains from my home. As I arrived home after picking up dinner, I sat in my vehicle on Vine Street facing the railroad tracks. At this time, I heard the train moving along the tracks and the sound made me stop and listen carefully. Having lived less than 200 yards from these tracks for nearly 30 years, I know what trains typically sound like. This train was making a noise that I can only describe as metal scraping metal. It sounded as if something metal was being dragged or pulled across another metal surface. I even

commented to my husband because it was such an unusual and unnerving sound and he agreed that it sounded as if something was wrong. I stood and listened for a minute or two then I went inside. It was dark and I did not see any sparks or flames in the short time that I stood there but I did not linger. I did not know who exactly to call to report this noise to at the time and quite frankly thought that I would not be taken seriously. I am not sure whether or not you already have documentation about the sounds that the train was making while traveling through my neighborhood. I do not have any cameras on my property but there are several businesses near me that may have security camera footage (Columbiana Boiler Company, Century, Columbiana Buick Cadillac Chevrolet, Reichard Industries etc.). Again, thank you for your service as you investigate this incident.

Jody Sturgeon-Edwards

[REDACTED]



05/10/2023

Mr. Tom Decker
[REDACTED]

Re: Fraternal Order of Police Lodge
5360 S. Prospect St.
Ravenna, OH 44266

Asphalt pavement based on approx. 16,800 sq.ft.

- Excavate area 10" deep and remove spoils
- Install 6" 304 limestone compacted to area
- Install 2.5" ODOT 301 base course asphalt compacted
- Install 1.5" ODOT 448-1 surface course asphalt compacted
- Stripe and Pavement markings

PRICE: \$ 81,500.00

Based on (2) move ins, tax exempt, and current asphalt index.

No bond, permit, fees, soil stabilization, or other items included.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Rockich
[REDACTED]